

Kansas State Plan for Suicide Prevention (DRAFT)

Awareness: Appropriately broaden the public's awareness of suicide and its risk factors:

1. Promote public awareness that suicide is a public health problem and, as such, many suicides are preventable. Use information technology appropriately to make facts about suicide and its risk factors and prevention approaches available to the public and to health care providers.

Strategies: Kansas State “suicide awareness month”

Publicized through the school system; notes home to parents about the signs and symptoms of depression in children, PTA speakers from the state speaker's bureau about suicide and stress in children,

Billboards

Video about suicide that could be shown to groups

Shorter videos about suicide for TV public announcements – have a TV station adopt this as an issue

Radio public announcements

2. Expand awareness of and enhance resources in communities for suicide prevention programs and mental and substance abuse disorder assessment and treatment.

Strategies: Work with community and professional groups

Ask Kansas Mental Health Centers to offer “suicide prevention” or “depression prevention” workshops in schools and or to community groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Young Matrons, etc.

Provide professional training in a variety of cities across the state about suicide, its prevention, and state resources (Speaker's Bureau)

Develop a brochure that can be given to not-for-profits and CMHCs about what to do/where to go if suicidal

3. Develop and implement strategies to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, substance abuse, and suicidal behavior and with seeing help for such problems.

Strategies: Develop a slogan for the state about mental illness; might use a contest for middle school children, tie in with National Mental Health Month or National Depression Awareness Month.

Intervention: Enhance services and program, both population-based and clinical care

1. Improve the ability of primary care providers to recognize and treat depression, substance abuse, and other major mental illnesses associated with suicide risk.

2. Increase the referral to specialty care when appropriate.

Strategies: Convene state's insurance companies to develop strategies to focus on this issue.

CLEARLY identify next steps for PCPs when faced with the suspicion of a

behavioral health or substance abuse disorder

CLEARLY identify next steps for PCPs when identifying a suicidal individual

3. Institute training for all health, mental health substance abuse and human services professionals about suicide risk assessment and recognition, treatment, management and aftercare interventions.

Strategies: Develop statewide conference. Work with BSRB to make suicide prevention CEUs a requirement for mental health professionals.

Work with the NEA state chapter or associated organization to develop a training track for teachers about suicide.

Methodology: Advance the science of suicide prevention

1. Enhance research to understand risk and protective factors related to suicide, interactions and effects on suicidal behaviors. Increase research on effective suicide prevention programs, clinical treatments for suicidal individuals and culture specific interventions.

Strategies: Identify a funding source to aid in the development of statewide programs. Create and distribute an RFP for program development and innovative clinical approaches.

2. Develop additional scientific strategies for evaluating suicide prevention interventions and ensure that evaluation components are included in all suicide prevention programs.

Strategies: As in 1 above. Also, might work with the departments of psychology, social work, or counseling at state Universities to encourage research in the area of program evaluation.

3. Encourage the development and evaluation of new prevention technologies, including firearm safety measures, to reduce easy access to lethal means of suicide.

Strategies: Identify state experts in the area of suicidology. Identify a state legislator interested in behavioral health issues. Working with these individuals, facilitate the creation of regulations related to pharmacy procedures and firearm safety.